

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

FOR ROCK/SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN COUNTIES

DECEMBER 2002



Unemployment Rates Increase in November

November Local Labor Scene

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for **the Janesville-Beloit Metropolitan Area** increased 0.5 of a percentage points in November to 5.9 percent. However, the November 2002 rate was two full percent lower as compared to the Janesville-Beloit Metro rate for November 2001.

The unadjusted unemployment rate for Southwest Wisconsin increased 0.3 percentage points in November, to 4.6 percent. However, the Southwest Wisconsin unadjusted rate fell by almost a full percent compared to last November, on the strength of strong year-to-year decreases in the unadjusted unemployment rates for Rock and Green Counties.

In searching for reasons as to why the unemployment rate grew in November, one reason that comes to mind is that the economy is continuing on a pattern of seasonal fluctuation, as determined by an observation of similar trends over the past several years.

In three of the eight Southwest Wisconsin counties; Green, Iowa, and Rock; increases in the civilian labor force were noted in November. In Rock County the increasing labor force total was a contributing factor to the rising unemployment rate in Rock County, because these additional job seekers were not put to work in November. While this change is significant, it does show some signs of an optimistic job outlook as any growth in the number of discouraged workers would be reflected in a decrease in the labor force. An increasing labor force allows one to conclude that workers in Rock County are becoming more optimistic about the 2003 job market. Therefore, one can infer from these figures that there is some expectation of strong rehiring patterns over the course of 2003 in Rock County.

An analysis of changes in employment in the region's major industry sectors over the course of the past month shows a

notable trend. The manufacturing sector continues to react to sluggish ordering and the growing pains of a gradual transition from generalized to specialized production cycles. Estimated employment among the region's manufacturing firms is 690 positions lower now as compared to a month ago.

Statewide

Wisconsin's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November was estimated at 5.1, up two-tenths of a percentage point from October's final rate and two-tenths percentage points higher than the November 2001 figure. Statewide, the manufacturing sector, both durable and nondurable continues to struggle, with durable goods manufacturing decreasing by 1,600 jobs.

Nondurable goods manufacturing also experienced a decrease of 1,500 jobs, which is near the norm for this time of year.

National Bits

The national seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November was 6.0 percent, up from 5.7 percent in October. CNN/Money predicts that Holiday Shopping Season 2002 will be the worst holiday shopping season in at least 30 years. According to ShopperTrak, preliminary national holiday sales figures don't look good. Holiday shopping fell 11 percent to \$113 billion between Thanksgiving and Christmas in 2002.

Timothy Noah, Slate Magazine, accesses the holiday shopping season in a different way. He says, "The business press pegged the 2002 holiday shopping season the 'worst in 30 years' not because sales declined, but because sales *increased* by a smaller-than-expected percentage." He does point out that, "... this year's holiday spending didn't keep pace with this year's overall rate of inflation. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Consumer Price Index rose about two percent over the past year. Corrected for inflation, then, holiday spending declined somewhere between 0.5 percent and 1 percent."

Labor Force Estimates (Seasonally Adjusted)			
	Janesville-Beloit MSA	Wisconsin (000s)	United States (000s)
Current month: November 2002			
Civilian Labor Force	80,700	3,067.6	142,733
Employment	75,900	2,912.2	134,225
Unemployment	4,800	155.4	8,508
Unemployment rate	5.9%	5.1%	6.0%
Change from October 2002			
Civilian Labor Force	500	-0.9	-390
Employment	-	-6.5	-689
Unemployment	500	5.6	299
Unemployment rate	0.5%	0.2%	0.3%
Change from November 2001			
Civilian Labor Force	(200)	66.1	454
Employment	1,500	56.8	-28
Unemployment	(1,600)	9.4	482
Unemployment rate	-2.0%	0.2%	0.4%

Note: All estimates are preliminary and based on place of residence.

Labor Force and Employment Estimates for Rock / Southwestern Wisconsin (*not seasonally adjusted*)

November 2002

	Grant	Green	Iowa	Lafayette	Richland	Rock	Region	Wisconsin
Civilian Labor Force*	25,300	19,400	16,500	7,500	8,400	80,200	157,300	3,053,929
Annual Percent Change	2.6%	1.7%	5.8%	4.5%	1.7%	0.1%	1.6%	2.0%
Employed	24,200	18,600	16,000	7,100	8,100	76,000	150,000	2,915,081
Unemployed	1,100	700	500	400	300	4,200	7,300	138,848
Unemployment rate(%)	4.2%	3.8%	3.0%	5.9%	4.1%	5.2%	4.6%	4.5%

Non-Farm Place of Work Employment Data

Total, all industries**	19,670	16,040	13,530	3,700	5,980	71,160	130,080	2,867,500
Annual Growth Rate:	3.74%	1.46%	20.04%	1.48%	2.59%	-0.64%	2.32%	0.40%
Construction & Mining	670	550	560	180	170	3,240	5,370	130,800
Manufacturing	3,130	3,260	690	510	1,640	17,490	26,730	567,300
Durable	1,920	2,170	580	280	1,210	12,860	19,030	338,300
Nondurable	1,210	1,090	110	230	430	4,630	7,700	229,000
Trans & Public Utilities	610	420	300	190	180	3,600	5,300	131,800
Wholesale Trade	720	560	400	370	180	3,580	5,820	135,700
Retail Trade	3,860	4,600	8,050	530	1,270	13,430	31,720	519,300
FIRE	1,130	380	180	230	230	2,100	4,250	153,900
Services	4,080	4,260	1,790	560	1,020	18,550	30,260	795,100
Government	5,470	2,020	1,550	1,160	1,280	9,160	20,640	433,700

Change from October 2002

Civilian Labor Force*	-200	800	500	-100	-200	300	1,100	249
Employed	-400	700	400	-100	-100	100	600	-12,367
Unemployed	200	0	100	0	0	200	500	12,616
Unemployment rate(%)	0.7%	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%
Total, all industries**	50	100	500	-20	-70	680	1,240	24,200
Construction & Mining	10	50	30	10	-10	-150	-60	3,030
Manufacturing	-150	-120	-20	-50	-130	-230	-690	-8,800
Durable	-200	-80	-20	-80	-190	-260	-810	-6,800
Nondurable	50	-40	0	30	60	30	120	-2,000
Trans & Public Utilities	-20	0	-20	0	10	70	40	-1,600
Wholesale Trade	10	-70	0	20	-10	70	40	-1,700
Retail Trade	100	90	380	-10	-10	-80	460	3,000
FIRE	40	0	10	10	20	80	150	3,200
Services	10	190	70	30	30	730	1,070	20,400
Government	50	-30	50	0	10	160	240	6,800

Change from November 2001

Civilian Labor Force*	600	400	900	300	100	100	2,400	59,643
Employed	600	400	900	200	100	1,500	3,700	53,936
Unemployed	100	-200	100	100	0	-1,400	-1,300	5,707
Unemployment rate(%)	0.1%	-0.7%	0.1%	1.4%	0.2%	-1.7%	-0.9%	0.1%
Total, all industries**	710	240	2,260	50	150	-460	2,950	11,500
Construction & Mining	-190	10	-40	50	-50	-90	-310	-8,300
Manufacturing	-260	-380	-60	-90	-20	-1,840	-2,650	-51,100
Durable	-470	-190	-70	-120	-110	-1,240	-2,190	-36,300
Nondurable	210	-200	10	20	90	-600	-460	-14,700
Trans & Public Utilities	-50	-20	-50	-30	20	360	230	-4,200
Wholesale Trade	-180	-140	40	70	-10	160	-50	-3,900
Retail Trade	380	600	2,170	-50	-50	-400	2,630	18,600
FIRE	410	-20	20	20	30	140	590	4,700
Services	140	180	70	120	70	710	1,290	18,300
Government	470	20	100	-10	160	500	1,230	37,400

* Includes participants residing in area. ** Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted.
Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/>

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